



THE RIGHT TO PROTEST



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1A5P-G1LD-G78Q

1

Warm up

Discuss the questions in pairs or small groups.

1. Have you ever taken part in a demonstration?
2. Do you think that the police should be allowed to arrest protesters, even if they are using non-violent methods?
3. Are you aware of Just Stop Oil? What do you think of their campaign?

2

Focus on vocabulary

Part A: Match the vocabulary with the correct definition.

Group 1

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. precar <u>i</u> ous (adj.) | a. failure or refusal to obey rules or someone in authority |
| 2. disob <u>e</u> dience (n) | b. an important route in a system of roads, railway lines, or rivers |
| 3. arter <u>i</u> al (adj.) | c. the action of preventing something from continuing |
| 4. t <u>a</u> rmac (n) | d. the material used for surfacing roads or other outdoor areas |
| 5. disr <u>u</u> ption (n) | e. dependent on chance; uncertain |



Group 2

inconveniencing (v)

stunt (n)

escalating (adj.)

outrage (n)

prominent (adj.)

1. _____ making something become greater or more serious
2. _____ causing trouble or difficulty
3. _____ something that is done to get attention for the person or people responsible for it
4. _____ a feeling of anger and shock
5. _____ very well-known or important

Part B: Complete the dialogue below with the words from the exercise above. You may need to change the tense or form of the word.

Tom: What do you think about these publicity _____¹ that climate change protesters are organising?

Hannah: At first, I felt a lot of _____², because they really _____³ my weekend. I wanted to go into the city centre, but they had blocked the main street by gluing themselves to the _____⁴.

Tom: Well, a lot of _____⁵ politicians are against them. They say that they are stopping businesses from operating and _____⁶ thousands of people.

Hannah: I know, but after I calmed down, I started to think that maybe they have a point. The planet is in a _____⁷ position at the moment. No one knows what will happen if we don't act now.

Tom: That's true, but do they really have to block _____⁸ routes in and out of the city? They are making a lot of people angry.

Hannah: They would argue that _____⁹ is an important part of protesting, they need to attract attention to their cause. My only worry is that their methods are _____¹⁰ and they might go too far.



**3 Listening for comprehension**

Watch the video about climate change protesters and decide if the following information is true (T), false (F), or not given (NG).



1. Just Stop Oil protesters demanded that the Dartford Crossing should be closed. _____
2. The protester on the bridge is unapologetic. _____
3. The protests began in April this year. _____
4. The bridge protest was not the only protest to occur that day. _____
5. Van Gogh's sunflowers painting was permanently damaged. _____
6. Dr Francois Gemenne is critical of the protest in the art gallery. _____
7. New police powers will prevent just stop oil protesters from operating. _____

4 Reading: general vocabulary

Part A: Match the words and phrases with the correct definitions.

deeds (n)	discharge (v)	force-feeding (v)	on license (phrase)
propaganda (n)	arson (n)	canvas (n)	granting (v)

1. _____ false information used to promote a political cause or point of view
2. _____ the crime of intentionally starting a fire
3. _____ intentional acts
4. _____ the cloth artists paint on
5. _____ making a person or animal eat or drink
6. _____ allow to leave somewhere officially
7. _____ on certain legal conditions
8. _____ giving or allowing someone something



Part B: The following text is about the Suffragettes. Use the words from the previous exercise to fill in the gaps.

The Suffragettes' difficult fight for the vote

The Suffragettes were part of the 'Votes for Women' campaign that fought to give women the right to vote in the UK. They used art, debate, _____¹, and attacks on property, including window smashing and _____², to fight for female suffrage. Founded in 1903, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) aimed to 'wake up the nation' to the cause of women's suffrage through ' _____³ Not Words'. Suffragettes' fight to win the vote became a highly public and, at times, confrontational struggle.

On 10th March 1914, Mary Richardson entered the National Gallery with a butcher's knife hidden in her sleeve and attacked Velasquez's Rokeby Venus, slashing it five times. After her arrest, she explained her actions on the basis that, "I have tried to destroy the picture of the most beautiful woman in mythological history as a protest against the government destroying Mrs Pankhurst, who is the most beautiful character in modern history. Justice is an element of beauty as much as colour and outline on _____⁴". "Mrs Pankhurst" was Emmeline Pankhurst, the campaigner for women's voting rights and leader of the WSPU, who had been arrested the day before.

As the campaign became increasingly militant, over a thousand Suffragettes received prison sentences for their actions. Many Suffragettes protested by going on hunger strike. In response, the government introduced a policy of _____⁵. When this failed, the British government passed the 1913 Prisoners (Temporary _____⁶ for Ill-Health) Act, commonly known as the 'Cat and Mouse Act'. This law allowed hunger-striking Suffragettes to be released from prison when they were weakened, but only _____⁷. Once their health had been restored, they would be re-arrested and returned to prison.

The outbreak of the First World War brought an immediate suspension of militant action and public protest as the Suffragettes threw themselves into supporting the war effort. The Women's Social and Political Union had not succeeded in achieving the vote, but its campaigning style eased the way for women to take a more active and public role in society during the war. It was this role that was acknowledged with the _____⁸ of the parliamentary vote to a limited number of women over the age of 30 in 1918.



Work in pairs and answer these questions.

1. When were women first able to vote in your country?
2. Do you think the Suffragettes were right to use these militant methods?
3. Do you see similarities between the Just Stop Oil protesters and the Suffragettes?
4. Why do you think it was known as the 'Cat and Mouse Act'?



5

Scanning for vocabulary

Part A: You are going to read an article about a controversial new law that might make it difficult to take part in protests. Find the expressions or phrases which mean the same as the following (page six).

1. _____ (para. 1): stop opposition or protest using military force or strict laws
2. _____ (para. 1): negative impact
3. _____ (para. 1): breaking an order from a court
4. _____ (para. 3): prevent something from happening in a forceful way
5. _____ (para. 3): make a point less clear
6. _____ (para. 4): break a decision made by a court of law
7. _____ (para. 5): have made known what I think

Part B: Match the vocabulary with the correct definition.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. bill (n) | a. a statement of a planned new law that is discussed before being voted on |
| 2. <u>dissent</u> (n) | b. intentionally become involved in a difficult situation in order to improve it or prevent it from getting worse |
| 3. <u>assault</u> (n) | c. a violent attack |
| 4. <u>proclamation</u> (n) | d. the process of rising to a position of higher importance |
| 5. <u>ascension</u> (n) | e. a strong difference of opinion on a particular subject |
| 6. <u>intervene</u> (v) | f. an official announcement |
| 7. <u>entitled</u> (v) | g. given the right to do or have something |





UK anti-protest bill

Controversial new law will make it easier to arrest protesters

1. The UK government is quietly attempting to hand itself new powers to suppress its political opponents, civil right advocates have warned. The Home Secretary has suggested a last-minute change to a widely criticised anti-protest bill that would allow them to apply for injunctions against anyone they deem 'likely' to carry out protests that could cause 'serious disruption' to 'key national infrastructure', prevent access to 'essential' goods or services, or have a 'serious adverse effect on public safety'. The proposal would also give police the power to arrest anyone they suspect to be breaching an injunction. Leading human rights groups say that the Public Order Bill would align the UK's anti-protest laws with those in Russia and Belarus.
2. The bill includes new powers, such as protest banning orders, that the government was forced to exclude from its Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act (PCSC) after they were voted down in the House of Lords earlier this year. At that time, peers from all parties spoke passionately against the changes, with Labour's Lord Hain saying that they were "the biggest threat to the right to dissent and the right to protest in my lifetime." In total, 14 government amendments were defeated in the Lords. However, the issue is back on the table following recent protests.
3. Jun Pang, of human rights group Liberty, said: "Expansive civil injunctions are already being used with growing and alarming frequency to clamp down on direct action tactics, with a wider chilling effect on the right to protest. We are concerned that these clauses further blur the line between the civil and criminal law, by effectively giving the Secretary of State new powers to intervene in protests and criminalise those who participate in them."
4. The government also wants to bring in national injunctions that the Home Secretary can apply for, which would effectively ban certain protests from happening, and have huge consequences for the kinds of trials activists would be entitled to. Damien Gayle, who has been reporting on environmental protest groups since 2018, said: "Anyone who was arrested for conducting a protest that the Home Secretary banned would then be found to be in breach of the injunction, making them in contempt of court and could be prosecuted on that basis. And contempt of court comes with a special kind of trial, which has a judge and no jury."
5. Most concerning of all is the fact that the wording of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act enables the police to determine themselves what kind of protest can amount to being worthy of arrest, and the government has the option to completely change the wording of the act to widen the definition of what constitutes a "serious disruption". Following the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the ascension of King Charles III, some members of the public were arrested for protesting against the monarchy. Symon Hill, 45, was arrested for shouting "who elected him?" He later tweeted: "I was arrested today in Oxford after I voiced my opposition to the proclamation of 'Charles III'. Can we be arrested simply for expressing an opinion in public? I was arrested under the Police Bill passed earlier this year. This is an outrageous assault on democracy."

Source: [opendemocracy.net](https://www.opendemocracy.net), [morningstaronline.co.uk](https://www.morningstaronline.co.uk), [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com), [newsweek.com](https://www.newsweek.com)



6 Reading comprehension

Complete the following sentences with two or three words from the article.

1. The proposal would give police the _____ anybody they think is breaching the injunction.
2. The bill contains _____, which were voted down in the House of Lords.
3. Jun Pang said that _____ are already being used.
4. National injunctions would _____ from happening.
5. Contempt of court involves a special trial, where there is a judge and _____.
6. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act enables the police to decide if a protest is _____.
7. Symon Hill was arrested under the _____ passed this year.

7 Debate

Look at the newspaper headlines about protests and climate change, and discuss them with your partner. Try to support your opinion with a few reasons, and refer to your own personal situation where possible.

Patient dies in ambulance stopped by Just Stop Oil protesters

Police arrest anti-government protesters outside parliament

UK at risk of flooding because of climate change

China CO₂ emissions greater than all developed nations combined



8 **Optional Extension/Homework**

Choose one of the following questions.

Write about:

1. Why is it important to be able to protest in a democratic society?
2. In what situations do the police need special powers to deal with protesters?
3. What can the law do to ensure that protests are able to take place?

You should:

- write at least 250 words,
- check your grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
